

*Per 2 S. SYMINGTON**Ref 0700450059-5**x ag 2**x SC 128 + Russia*

UPI-7

(DEFENSE)

SEN. STUART SYMINGTON (D-MO.), CHIEF CRITIC OF ADMINISTRATION DEFENSE POLICY, PLANNED TODAY TO QUIZ DEFENSE SECRETARY GATES ON WHETHER THERE WAS ANY DOWNGRADING OF THE RUSSIAN MISSILE THREAT IN SETTING UP THE NEW MILITARY BUDGET.

GATES AND GEN. NATHAN F. TWining, CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, WERE SCHEDULED TO APPEAR (AT 10 A.M.) BEFORE THE COMBINED SENATE SPACE AND PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEES AT THE INQUIRY INTO THE STATE OF THE NATION'S DEFENSE PROGRAM.

SYMINGTON HAS THREATENED TO MAKE PUBLIC SECRET INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES OF THE RUSSIAN MISSILE THREAT. HE SAID HE WOULD DO THIS IF THE ADMINISTRATION DENIED THE RED ROCKET THREAT WAS GREATER THAN EVER.

THE MISSOURI DEMOCRAT SAID CONGRESS HAD BEEN GIVEN FIGURES BY THE CIA SHOWING THE RUSSIAN THREAT HAD "INCREASED CONSIDERABLY" OVER LAST YEAR.

2/9--GE855A